

3-2018

How Accessible are the Libraries?

K.T. L. Vaughan

James Madison University, vaughakt@jmu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://commons.lib.jmu.edu/letfspubs>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Vaughan, K.T. (2018, March). How accessible are the libraries? Presented at the JMU Diversity Conference, Harrisonburg, VA.

This Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the Libraries & Educational Technologies at JMU Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Libraries by an authorized administrator of JMU Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact dc_admin@jmu.edu.

How Accessible are the Libraries?

KT VAUGHAN

ASSOCIATE DEAN

JMU LIBRARIES & EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGIES



Today's Outline

- Why is library accessibility important?
- The 2017 Carrier Library Accessibility Audit pilot
 - Qualitative results
 - Quantitative results
- Next phases of research
- What the libraries are doing to change
- Questions and ideas

Activity 1: What is the Library to You?

- Think of the last time you visited a library.
- Why did you go to the library?
- What did you do there?
- How did you feel in the library?

Why is library accessibility important?

- Student engagement leads to better outcomes.
- Students with disabilities tend to struggle more than other students.
- Students with disabilities who are engaged with their school tend to have better outcomes.

Why is library accessibility important?

- “Third places” provide space for people to engage with communities and each other.
- These places are inclusive, accessible, comfortable, friendly, and support both work and play.
- Libraries can be third places for students.

Quick Facts: Carrier Library

- Built in 1940s, 1960s, 1970s, 1991
- 80,000 ft² public space
- 1,000,000 visits per year



2017 Carrier Library Accessibility Studies

- 2 focus groups: 11 participants
- Audit instrument: 16 participants
 - Perceived quality and importance of accessibility
 - Six zones of Carrier Library
 - Open comment sections for each zone
- No participants reported having a disability.

Activity 2: Who?

- Visualize a “student with a disability” who might encounter a barrier in the libraries.
- What disability/ies or impairment/s did you visualize?

2017 Focus Groups/Audit: Qualitative Data

- The overwhelming majority of comments mentioned wheelchairs.
- Students are not aware of disability topics in general.
- Students referred to their own experiences.

2017 Carrier Library Accessibility Audit

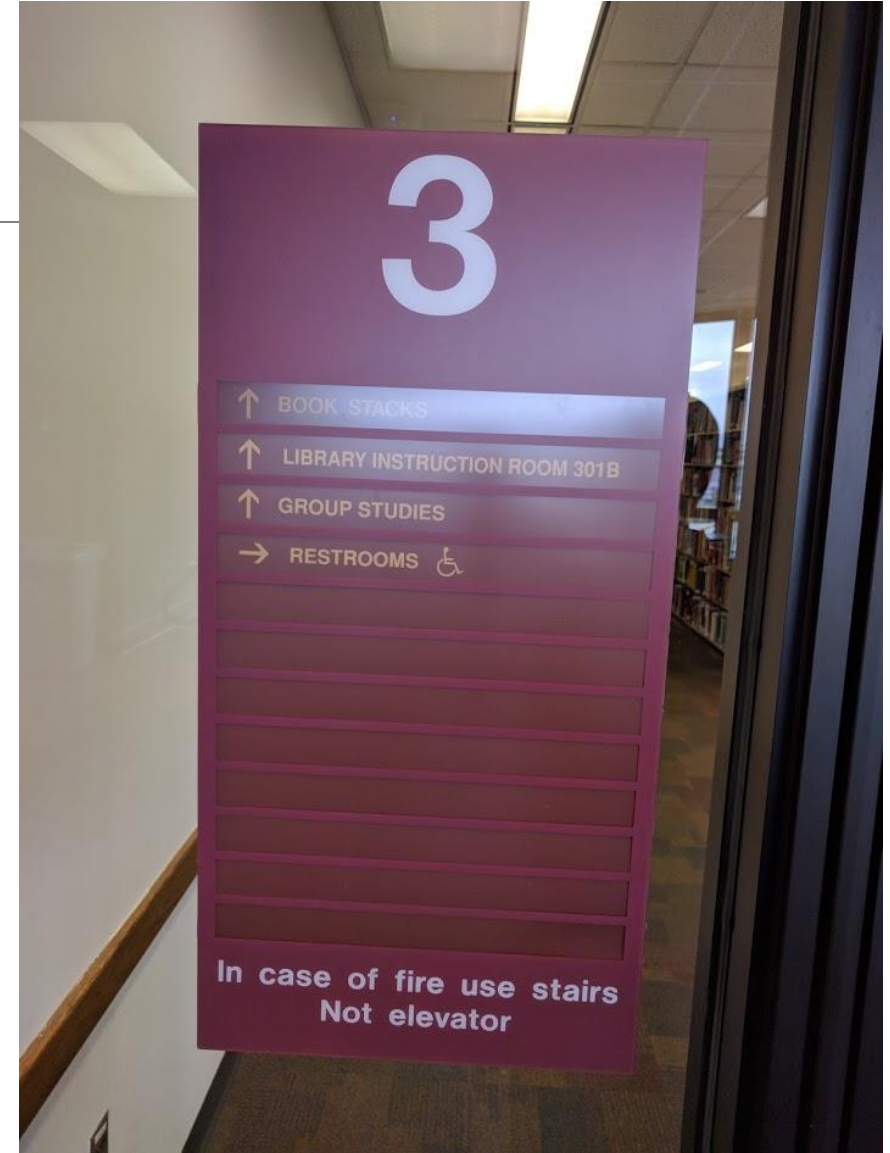
- Based on the International Federation of Library Associations *Checklist*
- Tested for reliability by library & ODS partners
- Tested for validity using SPSS

Activity 3: Auditing Carrier

- The following slides are a photo tour of the six zones included in the Audit.
- As we look at them, note areas of strength and weakness.















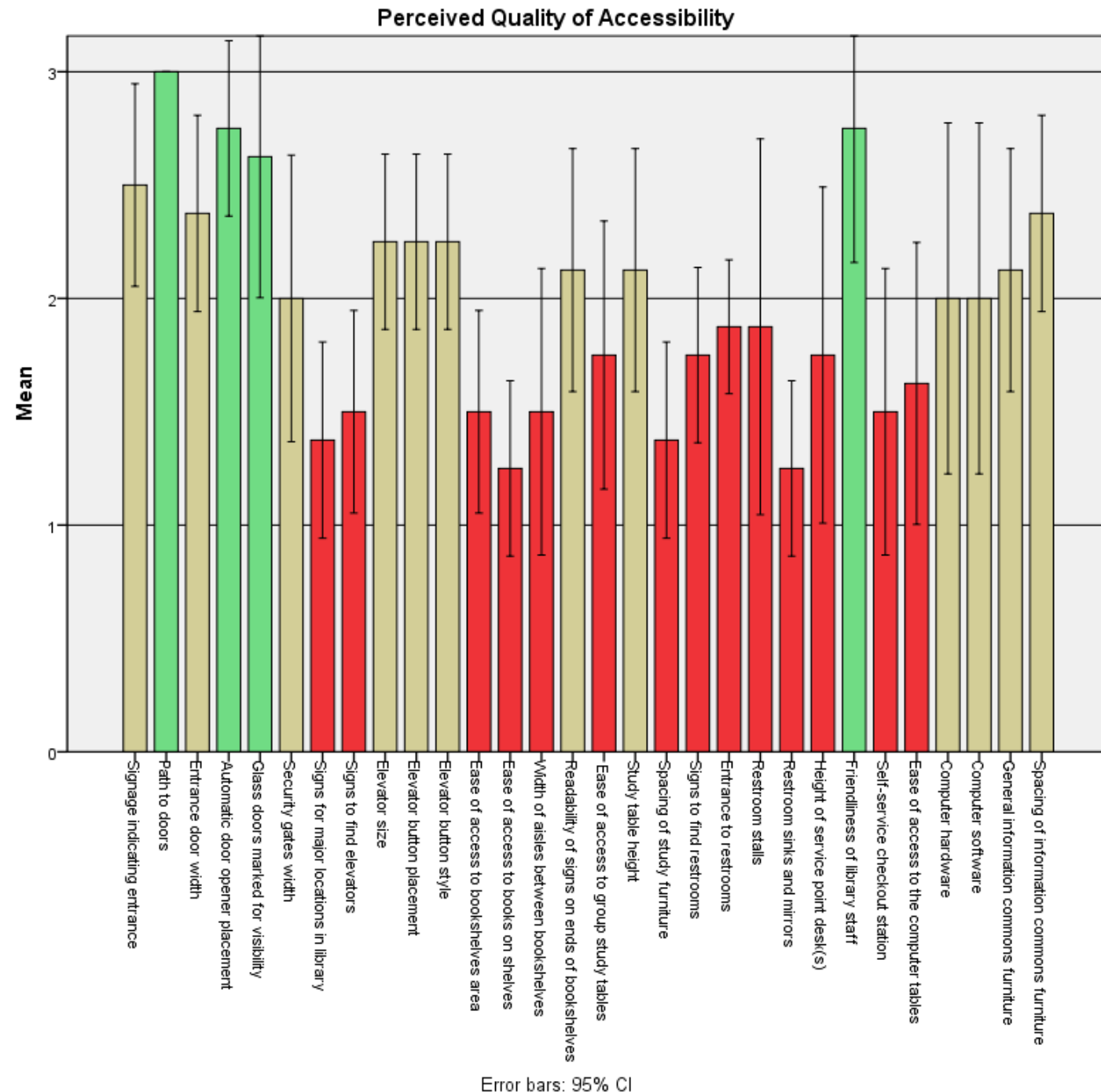






2017 Audit: Quantitative Data

- Areas of need:
 - Signage
 - Access to books
 - Table height and spacing
 - Service point height
 - Restrooms



Next Phases of Research

- 2018 Audit (new and improved!)
- Survey of library and accessible technology lab use
- Individual interviews with students and faculty with disabilities
- Phenomenological study of work at the service point

What are the libraries doing now?

- Signage and wayfinding initiative
- New/expanded services like book retrieval
- Accessible and adaptive technologies in the information commons and the AT Labs
- Universal design of the service point

What are future steps for the libraries?

- Accessibility information on the website
- Training for student workers and staff
- Incorporating universal design & accessibility into facilities operations.
- And other projects not related to physical spaces & services.

Questions and Ideas

K.T. Vaughan

vaughakt@jmu.edu

